

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY ATHENS
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SUBJECT: MODE - COMMERCE/MARITIME ADMINISTRATION (MARAD)
PROPOSAL TO TRANSFER REGIONAL FOREIGN MARITIME REPRESENTA-
TIVE FROM ROME TO ATHENS

1. COMMERCE/MARITIME ADMINISTRATION (MARAD) HAS PROPOSED
THE TRANSFER OF THE REGIONAL FOREIGN MARITIME REPRESENT-
ATIVE (FRM - MARITIME ATTACHE) POSITION FROM ROME TO
ATHENS. THE PROPOSED MOVE WOULD ELIMINATE ONE FOREIGN
NATIONAL SECRETARIAL POSITION AT ROME.

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2. SUBSTANCE OF COMMERCE JUSTIFICATION FOR THE PROPOSAL
FOLLOWS: THE FEDERAL MARITIME REPRESENTATIVE SERVING THE
EUROPEAN SUB-CONTINENT AND MIDDLE EAST AREA IS RESPONSIBLE
FOR THE FOLLOWING COUNTRIES: GREECE, ITALY, TURKEY,
ISRAEL, YUGOSLAVIA, PORTUGAL, EGYPT, SPAIN, GHANA, SOUTH
AFRICA, SAUDIA ARABIA, KUWAIT, OMAN, IRAN, AND THE ARAB
EMIRATES. TITLE II OF THE MERCHANT MARINE ACT OF 1936,

AS AMENDED, AUTHORIZES AND DIRECTS THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MARITIME ADMINISTRATION, TO INVESTIGATE, REPORT ON AND KEEP RECORDS OF VARIOUS DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN SHIPPING DATA. ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT TASKS OF THE FMR IS THE GATHERING OF VESSEL OPERATING AND SHIPBUILDING

COSTS FROM THESE NATIONS AND TRANSMITTING THIS INFORMATION TO THE MARITIME ADMINISTRATION. THESE DATA ARE UTILIZED IN CALCULATING VESSEL OPERATING AND CONSTRUCTION DIFFERENTIAL SUBSIDIES.

3. IN THE PERFORMANCE OF THESE TASKS, THE FMR MUST CALL UPON LOCAL SHIPPING LINES, MARITIME LABOR UNIONS, SHIPYARDS, GOVERNMENT AND QUASI-GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND OTHER BUSINESSMEN WHOSE ACTIVITIES RELATE TO THE CREWING, SUBSISTENCE, MAINTENANCE, REPAIRING, INSURANCE, AND OPERATION OF MERCHANT SHIPS. THIS INFORMATION MUST CLEARLY SHOW BREAKDOWNS BETWEEN PROCUREMENT AREAS, PRACTICES AND COSTS OF LABOR, MATERIALS AND SERVICES, ALL OF WHICH GOVERN THE FOREIGN OPERATOR'S EXPENSES. ON-THE-SPOT SURVEILLANCE IS ESSENTIAL IF SUCH INFORMATION IS TO BE ACCURATELY AND CURRENTLY COLLECTED.

4. MARAD'S DESIRE FOR GREATER MARKET DEVELOPMENT EMPHASIS IN THE MIDDLE EAST MAKES ATHENS A MORE DESIRABLE LOCATION FOR THE FMR. THE POTENTIAL OF GREECE AS A TRANSSHIPMENT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CENTER FOR TRADE WITH THE MIDEAST, THE PRESENCE IN ATHENS OF MANY US FIRMS DOING BUSINESS IN THE MIDEAST, AND THE HARD CORE SHIPPING INFORMATION AVAILABLE IN ATHENS PROVIDE A GREATER OPPORTUNITY TO ACCOMPLISH THE GOALS OF MARAD'S MARKET DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM WHICH IS DESIGNED TO GIVE U.S. OCEAN CARRIERS A HEAD START IN SECURING CARGOES. THE FMR WOULD CONTINUE TO PROVIDE MARITIME EXPERTISE TO OTHER US EMBASSIES IN THE REGION AS HE HAS DONE IN THE PAST. END COMMERCE SUMMARY.

5. COMMERCE REQUEST STATES BECAUSE FOREIGN COST DATA ARE HIGHLY SENSITIVE, THEY CAN BE OBTAINED ONLY THROUGH ON-THE-SPOT SURVEILLANCE AND LIAISON ON THE COUNTRIES INVOLVED. COMMERCE THEREFORE OPPOSES RELOCATION OF THIS POSITION TO U.S.

6. DEPARTMENT IS ASKING MARAD WASHINGTON TO SUPPLY COMPARATIVE COST DATA REGARDING PERFORMANCE OF THE JOB (A) ON TDY EX-WASHINGTON; (B) BY RESIDENT UNITS BASED AT (1) ATHENS AND (2) SOME NEA LOCATION; AND (C) CONSOLIDATING THREE MARAD UNITS FOR EUROPE (NOW LONDON, BRUSSELS, ROME) AT ONE OR TWO LOCATIONS. AT THE SAME TIME, WE WOULD APPRECIATE COM COMMENTS REGARDING THE PROPOSED

RELOCATION, IN VIEW OF POSSIBLE IMPACT ON MISSION'S ADMIN-
ISTRATIVE SUPPORT CAPABILITIES AND IN LIGHT OF THE PRES-
IDENT'S DESIRE TO LIMIT AND REDUCE THE NUMBER OF AMERICAN
OFFICIALS ABROAD. VANCE

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